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OF

The Little E HOWELL.

THE MARTYR MISSIONARY."

SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND REVISED
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THE

LITTLE BURNT GIRL:

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MEMOIR

OF

CATHARINE HOWELL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE MARTYR MISSIONARY."

WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION:
1122 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.
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TO THE READER.

THE following narrative is designed to illustrate the power of true religion to support even a child under severe bodily suffering. It may be relied upon as an unexaggerated relation of facts.

THE

LITTLE BURNT GIRL.

Catharine Howell was known as the "little burnt girl." For many long months she endured great suffering and pain, and the children of the Sunday-school to which she belonged, when they asked about her, called her by this name, so that I have thought it best to speak of her by the same name in this brief memoir.

Her story is a very short one, but it is full of instruction for the young; and the children who knew her, and loved her, showed so much interest

in her case that I have been led to think other children would read the sad tale, and learn a lesson of patience under suffering that may do them good. When they come to know how much this dear child suffered, they may learn to be thankful that they are not in such distress; and when they are afflicted, they may be taught that God sends afflictions for their good.

The story of this little burnt girl will show those who read it, how it is that those things which seem the greatest trials, and hardest to be borne, are often the greatest blessings which God bestows upon us. They are meant to lead us to the Saviour who suffered for us far more than we ever suffer, and who loves to have us come to Him for help when we are in pain. And it is when our sorrows

thus lead us to Him who is able and willing to show mercy to us, that we can say with pious David, "It is good to be afflicted."

This little girl was born in the city of Newark, in the state of New Jersey, on the twelfth day of February, 1834. In very early childhood she was known among her playmates, and especially by her brothers and sisters, as a girl of mild and sweet temper. She never quarrelled. Though I do not know that she ever did exactly as a little girl did of whom I was lately reading. Her name was Mary. She was sitting on the floor playing with her brother Corie, and he struck her on the cheek. She turned the other right up to him, and said, "*There*, Corie."

This was doing as the Saviour said; and if children would do so

when they are struck by those with whom they are playing, there would be very little quarrelling. It always takes two to quarrel, and it too often happens that when one is willing, another is ready.

But very seldom did Catharine Howell give a cross word to one of her playmates. Her voice was soft and gentle, and her smile was sweet, so that she made the children love her, when she could not tell why.

Most children love to have their own way. And so do many grown people. But Catharine Howell was always willing to give up her will, if by so doing she could please those with whom she was playing. How much trouble would be saved in families, if the children had this spirit, and if, instead of trying to see which should *beat*, they would try to see

which could yield to the other with the most cheerfulness. This was the spirit of Catharine, and this ought to be the spirit of every child who reads her life.

As soon as Catharine was old enough, she was sent to the Sabbath-school of the Third Church, in Newark, to which her parents belong. And it is at this time that her history begins to discover more that should interest the young, and lead them to imitate her who was taught in that school to know the Lord, so that when she was brought so early in life to lie down on a bed of death, she knew where to look for the Saviour of her soul.

Her mother says that Catharine loved much to go to the Sabbath-school. On Sunday she was anxious to have it pleasant weather that she

might not be kept at home by the rain, and if any thing happened which seemed to make it necessary for her to stay at home, she would urge every reason she could think of to induce her parents to let her go. Yet if they still thought it more prudent for her to stay at home, or if one of the younger children required her attention, instead of pouting or fretting about it and looking cross, she would say, "Mother knows best," and taking her little books she would sit down pleasantly, and read or talk about the school which she loved so dearly.

Other children love the Sunday-school. There was a little boy that went to the same one that Catharine attended. He was taken very sick, and it was plain to his friends that he was soon to die. On the last Sunday

of his life he said that he wished he could go once more to the school; but as he was too sick even to sit up, of course he could not go out; and when it was about time for the school to begin, he asked his mother to take him to the window that he might see the children on their way. She wrapped him up in a blanket, and carried him in her arms to the window, and when he had watched his young companions, with their books in their hands, going by to school, his mother carried him back and laid him in bed, and very shortly afterwards he died.

But there is a great difference among children about this. Some of them seem to care very little about it, whether they go or not; so that if you look at the class to which they belong, you will miss them once or twice every

month. If the weather is not just so pleasant, or they do not feel perfectly well, or their parents have company, these children will make an excuse, and stay away. Not that they have any great *dislike* to the school, or to their teacher, but they do not *love to go*, and so they go or stay away, just as it happens.

Now the Sunday-school does such children very little good. You never hear of these scholars being much improved by the instructions they receive. They forget all that they learn, and when wicked people see how careless and thoughtless these children are growing up, they spitefully say, "See how much good your Sunday-schools do." But those children who love the Sabbath, and the school, and their teacher, and the lesson, and the library books, *they* are

the children who *feel* what they learn, who lay it up in their hearts, and are made better by the blessed privileges which the Sabbath-school brings.

Catharine Howell thought the Sabbath-school was one of the most pleasant places in the world. She could always say,

> "I have been there, and still would go,
> 'Tis like a little heaven below."

And it really seemed sometimes a "little heaven," for when the children were serious, and then when they all engaged in singing some of their sweet hymns, it did seem as if God was there, and as if they *felt* his presence and power in their hearts. But Catharine thought of the blessedness of these scenes more when she came to be shut up at home with long and distressing sickness, and when she was confined to her weary bed. Then she

called to mind the hymns she used to sing, and the verses of Scripture which she learned, and when she became so feeble that she could not hold a book in her hand, and her eyes so weak that she could not read, it was sweet for her to think of the precious truths which she had been taught; and I suppose, that, by thinking of these things, she was led to give her heart to God, and to believe in the Lord Jesus.

We come now to speak of the dreadful event which happened to this dear child, and which gave her the name of "the little burnt girl." During the week, she was in the habit of going to a small school in the same street where she lived, and close by her father's house.

On the 17th day of February, 1843, when she was just nine years and five days old, the sad event occurred. Her

father and mother were going that day into the country to make a visit, and Catharine had expected to go with them to have the pleasure of a sleigh-ride; but something happened to make it inconvenient for her parents to take her with them, and one of them said that perhaps she had better go to school before they started, as she would feel unpleasantly to see them go off without her.

"O no," said she, "let me stay and see you go. I can go with you some other time, and that will be just as well."

How much better this was, than to cry, as many of her age would have done, and try to make their parents take them along, though it might be very inconvenient for them.

Her parents set off, and Catharine watched them till they were out of

sight, for she would have been very glad to go and have a ride; but as soon as they were gone, she went cheerfully for her books, and with a light heart set off for school. It was early, and there was only one scholar, a little boy, in the room when she arrived. The morning was very cold, and the stove was red-hot. The little boy was standing near the stove, with his back to it, and he asked Catharine, as soon as she came in, to show him about his lesson. She stepped up by the side of him, to look over his book, and as she turned her back to the stove, her clothes touched it, and in a moment they were in a blaze!

The little boy could do nothing to help her, and they both rushed to the door, but were, for some time, unable, in their fright and hurry, to get it

open. As soon as they could get out, Catharine ran home, but in her terror mistaking the house next to her father's for her own, she rushed in there, and then, finding her mistake, she flew out and ran into her own, where her oldest sister caught her in her arms, folded a blanket around her burnt body, and put out the raging flames.

It will be readily believed, that by this time she was awfully burned. When a child's clothes take fire, it is almost impossible to put out the flames before the poor sufferer is dangerously burnt, even if it is seen the moment it takes place. But here the flames had been in progress for some minutes before any help was found, and they had fastened upon the flesh of the poor girl, and made

dreadful wounds too shocking to be described.

Who can tell how great must be the anguish of such burns? No one who has never felt it can know any thing about it; but when we see persons suffering the agony of a burn, we are willing to believe that there is scarcely any, perhaps no bodily suffering to be compared with it. I remember that when I was a little boy I scalded one of my hands so that the skin came from off the back of it, and though this was many, many years ago, I remember distinctly how the pain tormented me for hours, as if new fire were all the time applied to the wound, and it seemed as if I could not live, even with that little burn. But what was this, compared with the torture that Catharine Howell must have suffered, when her flesh

was burned on her bones, while life remains with all its sensitiveness, every nerve being awake to the tenderest feeling, and the anguish of the first moment of pain being repeated over and over again, with every tedious hour that wears itself away. There is no torture like that of fire. So the martyrs found it, when, for the sake of Christ and his truth, they gave their bodies to be burned. It would not be strange if they should sometimes have shrunk from the stake, when they thought of what they must suffer. The other day, I asked a little boy what he would do if wicked men should take him and threaten to put him to death, unless he would pray to a wooden idol as the heathen do. He thought a moment, and then answered, "Well, if they were going to kill me by just cutting my head off, I would

let them do it; but this burning up,— I don't know about that!" And I think the boy expressed very nearly the feelings of all good children and of some good men. We shrink from the thought of such long-continued anguish, and are glad to find some way of escape. But we must never do wrong to escape any suffering, however long or severe. Children sometimes tell lies for fear of being punished! They ought to be willing to suffer any thing rather than to sin against God.

And if *fire* is dreadful for persons to bear who have the strength of manhood and of mature minds, how much more dreadful must it be, in the case of such a little child as this, with all its tender sensibilities alive to pain, to be called to writhe under the agonies of such a calamity! The

worst burns were on the back of little Catharine, and they were so deep and painful that she could not lie for a single moment on them, and when she was laid on her side, she could not bear the weight even of a single sheet upon her. For some time they held the clothes up so that they should not touch her, and then her father made a light frame to support the covering, so that it should not rest on the suffering child. The kind-hearted doctor did all he could to relieve her pains, and it was doubtless owing to his watchful attention and skill, and the tender care she received from her parents and sisters, that (with the blessing of God on their efforts) her life was spared so long after the event took place.

What a blessing it is to have friends to care for us when we are sick! How

thankful should children be that God gives them parents to watch over them in their helpless infancy, and through the days and nights of sickness and distress which they are called to endure! Many children die for the want of this very care which you would have if you should be taken sick, or meet with such an accident; and there are thousands of parents among the heathen who throw their children away to starve and die, or put them to death by burying or beating them, as soon as they are born.

In the same Sabbath-school to which Catharine Howell belonged, there is a little girl who was taken by her father when she was a few months old and laid upon a log, and just as he was going to pound her to death with a club, a kind-hearted woman came along, and begged him to spare

the child, and she would take it and bring it up. He gave her the child, and she carried it home with her and fed it; and the child lived. This was in China. The little child was brought to this country, and is now adopted as one of the children of a pious family in Newark, N. J.

How wonderful are the ways of Providence! Instead of being born in the midst of such cruelty as prevails in China and other heathen lands, and instead of having parents who care nothing about their children but to get rid of them as soon as they can, you have those who look upon you as their greatest treasure, and would suffer for you, rather than that you should suffer. You ought to love your parents tenderly, and try to make them happy; but you will never do

for them half so much as they have done for you.

When Catharine Howell was first burned, we all thought that she could live but a very short time. The doctor could give no encouragement in her case, for the wounds were so deep, and she was naturally of such a delicate and feeble frame, that every one supposed she must soon sink into the grave. But in great mercy God was pleased to order it otherwise, that the sore trial might be sanctified to her soul.

As soon as the pastor of the church at which Catharine attended heard of the accident, he called to see her, and whenever she was able to converse, he endeavoured to turn her thoughts to those truths which seemed to be the most important in view of her approaching death. Her Sabbath-school

teacher and others visited her, and very many were the prayers offered up for her, by those who heard of the sore affliction. The children of the school were greatly affected when they heard of it, and we prayed for little Catharine at the opening of every school for many weeks, though we thought on each Sabbath, that before another week passed she would be far beyond the reach of our prayers.

As it is now two years since these events occurred, and no notes were made at the time of the conversations with her, I cannot give the words which she used when we talked with her about the state of her heart, and her views about dying. But I remember, with great distinctness, the nature of her feelings, and I can trace the various steps by which she was led (as we hope) to embrace the Saviour.

Perhaps the reading of it may lead other children to follow in her steps, till they find the pardon of their sins and the salvation of their souls.

At first she did not like to hear any thing said about death, or even on the subject of religion. This seems very strange in the case of a little girl who had loved to go to Sunday-school, and to read the Bible and other good books. Such a child, we should think, would love to talk of God and heaven and her immortal soul. And especially if she were laid on a bed of sickness, and apparently about to die, it would be expected that she would want some one to sit down by her and tell her what she must do to be saved.

But her unwillingness to hear of Christ and the way to heaven, shows that her heart was not right; that she

was still in a state of sinfulness, and of course unprepared to meet God in judgment. All the sweet, pleasant things we had seen in her while she was in health, her gentle disposition, her kindness to her brothers and sisters, her winning ways and words, would have been of no avail, if she had never loved the Lord Jesus Christ, nor taken any pleasure in hearing of his love for dying sinners. Yet she thought sometimes that she loved him because he died on the cross, but when we came to talk plainly with her, it was evident that she had no interest in him as her Saviour.

She had not been long confined before she was brought to see and to feel that she had a wicked heart. For some weeks her bodily sufferings were so severe that it was impossible

for her to think of any thing else. The pain was constant; and whenever her wounds were dressed, which was very often, the anguish was so terrible that it seemed sometimes as if the little sufferer must die under the torture. When these dreadful operations were to be performed, she had to be taken out of bed and laid across her mother's knees, and so keenly did the sweet child suffer, and so long did the operation continue, that when she was again placed on her cot, she would be so exhausted with suffering, that it was difficult to tell whether she was dead or alive.

The first time that I saw her after she was burnt, she was in this state of stupor, and she looked just as if she were dead; and it would not have been in the least degree strange if she had never revived.

By degrees the keenness of the anguish wore away, and the wounds healed a little around the edges, so that she could lie in the bed with less distress; and perhaps she became accustomed, in some measure, to her situation, though it sounds strangely to talk of being accustomed to such misery as she was called to endure. It is hard for older people to learn patience, under such trials, and some never do. But how much harder must it have been for one so young and tender, to be patient in the midst of such sore distress!

It was one of our first efforts to lead her to look upon herself as a sinner in the sight of a holy God, and the great burden of our prayer was, that the Holy Spirit would convince her of sin, and thus prepare the way for her to be led by the same Spirit

to sincere repentance. And it was a delightful proof of the value of early religious instruction, that she could so readily understand the truth which was now urged upon her mind, and could see the necessity of that change of heart which her pastor and others insisted on as necessary to her salvation. It is very difficult to make those who have had no early knowledge of the Scriptures, feel the importance of the simplest truths of the gospel; and though they have always lived in a Christian land, and have heard the gospel a thousand times, yet their ignorance of what they must do to obtain eternal life is wonderful. In this respect, as well as in many others, Sabbath-schools have been of inestimable value to multitudes, who, without them, might have grown up in sin, and died unprepared to meet

God, and that with the light of the gospel all around them.

One evening I sat down by the side of Catharine's little cot, and as she looked up to me with a sweet smile in the midst of her pain, I could not refrain from a tear of sympathy. She said she was *so* glad I had come; she had been hoping all day that I would come and see her. After a little talk of this kind, I said to her,

"Catharine, my dear, when you think of your Heavenly Father who has done so much for you, and given his Son to die on the cross for poor sinners, how does it make you feel?"

"I feel," said she, "as if I had been very wicked."

"So you have, my dear child; though you have read your Bible ever so much, and said your prayers ever so often, if you have not loved God

with all your heart,—yes, more than you love any thing and every thing else,—you are not prepared to die." I then said,

"Do you think, Catharine, that God has done right in letting you suffer all this dreadful pain?"

"O yes," said she, "I have been such a wicked girl."

"And do you feel," I said, "that it would be all right if God should let you die in your sins?"

She said nothing for a moment, but was evidently much troubled, and on my repeating the question, she answered,

"Yes, but I want to be good, and go to heaven."

"I pray that God will make you good, and fit you for heaven. But you know that unless you feel sorry for the sins of your past life, and ask

God to forgive all that you have done wrong, you can never go to heaven and be happy among the angels, and the good who are there."

She said she had been thinking about her wicked heart, and she wanted God to make it good, so that she might love him; and she told me that often when they thought she was asleep, she was praying to God to forgive her sins and prepare her to meet him in heaven.

Every time we saw her, the more willing she appeared to be to talk about her soul, and her interest in the subject of religion seemed to increase day by day.

Her mother would find her in tears, and, on asking her if she felt any new pain from her dreadful sores, little Catharine would tell her that it was

not the burns that made her cry—it was her wicked heart—and she wanted to have it changed that she might love God. She took great delight in hearing books read to her which give accounts of children who were early led to the Saviour, and she was always pleased when one of the family could sit down and read the Bible to her. There was one little book that pleased her very much, and I think greatly assisted her in learning the way in which a child should come to Christ. It was the memoir of a little boy in New Jersey, who was in sickness brought to see his need of a Saviour, and who gave precious evidence that he was truly converted to God.

Catharine Howell was confined to that cot *eight months*, without strength to turn herself, and all this time she

was unable to lie on her back. And oh! how long and weary must those days and weeks and months have seemed to that little sufferer. It would not have been strange if she had become very peevish and discontented when she thus lingered along, scarcely growing any stronger, and having very little hope of ever getting well. But the greatest anxiety that she ever expressed about her sickness was, that she could not go to Sunday-school. She did long to be able to go again, and enjoy the pleasures which had been so sweet to her in the sunny days of her health, but which she expected never to see again. Yet she was submissive. Indeed the more she suffered the more quiet she became, so that it was a comfort to those who waited on her,

to see the mild and pleasant spirit with which she bore her long continued affliction.

This was a great relief to the parents of Catharine, but who can tell how much a mother must undergo, who nurses a sick child, and especially such a sufferer as this? There is no love on earth like that with which a mother watches over a *sick* child. Day after day, and night after night she ministers to its numberless wants, with sleepless care, trying a thousand little arts which none but a mother ever thinks of, to soothe its pains, to recover its health, or smooth its passage to the tomb. I have known a mother to sit four weeks, night and day, by the bed of a sick child, and never leave it but for a minute or two at a time, silently and

devotedly watching the progress of disease, and seeking by faithful and tireless love to arrest the hand of the destroying angel. Children never know, and seldom stop to think how much they owe their parents, and never can they pay them for the half of what they have received in infancy, in sickness, and through all the waywardness of childhood and youth. A mother suffers in one night of anxiety with a sick child, more than that child is likely to suffer for the mother in all its future life.

In speaking of the care which Catharine received at the hands of her parents, I am reminded of the tenderness with which she was treated by her brothers and sisters, of whom there was a large family. They remembered how kind she was

to them when she was well, and how much she had always tried to please them, and they loved her dearly and strove to see which should be the most faithful in waiting upon her, or reading for her, or talking to her now that she was sick.

Children should learn to be *quiet* and *kind* when there is sickness in the house. Then they are prevented from enjoying many of their noisy plays, and are often tempted to sports that may disturb the sufferer. They should think how they would like to be treated if they were sick, and remember that very soon they may be on the same bed. It is a good rule everywhere and always, to do unto others as we would have them do to us.

Toward the latter part of the eight

months I have mentioned as the first period of Catharine's confinement to the bed, her mind seemed to be more clearly exercised than it had been before, on the nature and effects of sin, and the great willingness of the Saviour to have mercy, and to forgive, and fit her for heaven. She had had many serious conversations with her pastor and pious friends, and the instructions which she received, she was in the habit of thinking over, for hours together, when she lay as if asleep. She was naturally very diffident, and therefore did not express herself freely, except in answer to questions; so that it was not always easy to learn just the state of her mind. One day I said to her,

"Catharine, do you feel as if you would be ready to die and meet God

in judgment *now* if he should call you away?"

She looked up with great sweetness of expression, and said, that she had prayed to God to give her a new heart, and she thought he had.

"Are you willing now to be in his hands, and let him do with you just as he pleases."

"Yes," she said, "I am."

"And would you not," I asked, "be glad to get well and go out of doors again?"

"Oh yes; I want to go to church, and to Sunday-school."

But, my dear child, if you should get well, would you not be careless again about your soul, and forget these feelings that you have had while you have been sick?"

She said she felt now as if she

should love God always, and try to please him. She loved to talk about heaven, and especially to hear of the life and death of Jesus Christ, whom she looked upon now as the Saviour of her soul.

In answer to other questions which I put to her, she said that it seemed to her a very wicked thing that she had sinned against God so many times and so much, and she felt very sorry that she had so often grieved her Heavenly Father. On this point she was very tender, and she took great delight in the thought that the God whom she had grieved was willing to forgive her for the sake of his Son, Christ Jesus. And it was the constant aim of her pastor and others who conversed with her to make this truth plain to her mind, and to im

press it deeply on her heart. The evidence which she gave that she received the truth in the love of it, and trusted in it, was very comforting then, and is pleasant to think of now that she is gone to the other world.

We do not pretend to say *when* it was that she was led by the Holy Spirit to give herself up to God Probably she could not herself tell the precise time. Nor is it very important in her case or in that of others, to fix upon the very day or the week when the heart was changed It is of more importance to know whether she showed the spirit of a child who had truly turned from sin, and had come by faith to the Saviour. We have seen that she felt it to be an evil and wicked thing that she had sinned against God, her Father. She

felt sorry on account of those sins, and she gave good evidence that her heart was pained in view of her past life, though no one else would have been able to point out any thing in her words or ways that would seem to be the occasion of grief. The Spirit of the Lord opened her eyes to see her state as a sinner, and then she saw how vile the heart must be in the sight of heaven. Then she desired to become holy, to be like God, and be prepared to go away into his presence, to dwell with him for ever. But the most delightful evidence of a renewed heart which she gave at this time, was a gentle trust that Jesus Christ was able and willing to forgive sin, and a comfortable assurance that she had been accepted of him as one of the lambs of his fold.

After these eight long months had worn away, it pleased God to give her the hope of returning health. Her parents and friends were flattered with the thought that perhaps she might regain her strength, and be able to enjoy the bright world which she had loved so much in the days of her early childhood. *But it was one long year from the time she was burned, before she was able to go out of the house.* Think of *that*, you who love to enjoy the freedom of the streets and the fields! Think of being shut up a whole year in a single room! The bright days of spring came, with their sweet flowers to adorn the earth and shed their fragrance on the balmy air; the warm summer came, inviting the young to go abroad in the fields; the

autumn came, rejoicing in its fruits, the season, of all others, when children love to find their pleasure in the abundance of God's bounties which are spread around them; but through all these seasons and the winter that followed, our little friend was confined to her one room, without so much as a taste of the wide world around her. Think of her confinement, you that are young and well, and let me ask you if you could be shut up, without a murmur, *for a whole year.*

Catharine Howell did not murmur. She felt that it was the Lord who had afflicted her, and she was willing that he should afflict her as long and as much as he pleased. She learned, in the school of affliction, to lie in the hands of her Heavenly Father, just as

she lay on her mother's knees to have her wounds dressed. She knew that it would give her great pain to have them torn open and cleansed, and that it was no pleasure to the kind physician or to her tender parents thus to add to her sore distress. But she also knew that it was for her good to have it done, and it was kindness in them to do it, and she yielded cheerfully to whatever they directed. So she bowed to the will of God, knowing just as well, that He desired to do her good, and that however painful her afflictions might be *now*, they were intended to prepare her for higher enjoyment hereafter. It was then sweet to submit to the righteous dealings of the Lord, and to feel as Job did, when he said, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him."

With the opening of the second spring, she was well enough to leave the house and breathe once more the sweet air of heaven. Her young heart swelled with gratitude and joy when she was thus permitted to behold, again, the world from which she had been so long excluded. She was still too feeble to walk, but her friends loved to take her to ride, that she might gather strength by going abroad, and that they might *see the pleasure* which she took, in her quiet way, in looking out on the face of nature.

It was with real delight that I welcomed her to my house, where she came the first time that she was able to ride out. But I was even more pleased when on the next Sabbath I saw her in her place in the Sabbath-school, and those will not

soon forget it who saw the sweet smile that lighted up her countenance, and disclosed the joy of her soul, when she was allowed to come back to the spot that she so much loved. Her case had excited so much interest in the school, and she had been so often made the subject of special prayer that God would spare her life and let her come again into the school, that we took occasion on that day to give public thanks to God that he had answered our prayers, and so far restored our dear little Catharine to health.

On the fourth of July, 1844, the children of the Sabbath-school had a "celebration," or a meeting in the church for religious exercises, and then going out under the shade of some great trees, they took the refresh

ments that had been provided. But among them all, happy as they were, there was not one that was so happy as our little Catharine. She could scarcely realize that she was once more one of that joyful company. She had long ago given up all thought of ever being able to go out again, but now she was permitted to meet and mingle with her young companions, and to enter into all the innocent pleasures provided for children that love their Sabbath-school.

For a few months she was well enough to go out occasionally, and her friends loved to send for her to be amused with their children. She had not strength enough to enter into the sports of those of her own age, nor did she manifest any disposition to engage in them. When at home,

or when out on a visit, she seemed inclined to sit down and *quietly* think, or read some good book, rather than to mingle in the plays of her companions, though she was always pleased to see them in the midst of their enjoyments.

She was always feeble after her confinement, and when we looked at her she seemed like a frail flower just ready to fall. And whether at home or abroad, in the company of children or alone, she now exhibited that meek and quiet spirit which belongs to one who is not long to be in this world.

In the course of the summer her parents took her into the country, where she spent a few weeks, visiting her friends. There was a faint hope that a change of air and scene would revive her feeble frame, and perhaps

establish her health. She was very happy, in her way, while she remained here, and her friends were impressed continually with the evidence of her submissive spirit, that now shone in all her looks and words. Her thoughts seemed to be away from the things around her, and dwelling on something above. She said but very little. Indeed she never was inclined to be talkative, and the state of her mind was to be learned from her deportment rather than from any thing that fell from her lips. Yet no one could detect in her the least token of unhappiness or discontent with her situation, or any feeling of impatience when she found that she was not to be able to partake of the pleasures which children seek after with so much delight.

Her visit to the country disappointed her parents' hopes. She enjoyed the change greatly, and, at first, appeared to gather strength, but she soon declined again; and when, in the fall, she came back to Newark, she was not materially better.

It had now been settled in the minds of her parents, that Catharine would never get well. Her constitution was naturally delicate, and was evidently not sufficient to sustain the shock it had received. The gentle sufferer herself had long felt, what they were slow to learn; and while they and we had been cherishing the hope that she might be raised to health and some measure of strength, she had been looking quietly and patiently to a better world as her *home*, where she should

suffer no more for ever, but be happy always with God and the Lamb.

Her hours of private prayer were sweet to her, for then she found Jesus precious to her soul, and she could tell him *all* that she felt, and find joy in the sweet return of his love. She told me that she loved to pray, and did pray when no one knew it; for she was so timid that probably she would have taken no comfort in trying to pray, if she had thought that any one could hear her but her heavenly Father.

One morning she was sitting on a high seat, and several of her little brothers and sisters were playing around her, when, by some carelessness, her seat was overthrown, and she fell upon the floor, striking on her back, which was still sore, and

where such a blow could not fail to be very dangerous. She was so badly hurt that she could not get up; but being carried to her bed, she was there laid down, and she never left the room again. From this time she sunk very rapidly. All the symptoms of a rapid decline were increased, and it was painfully evident that our little sufferer could not long be spared to us.

A friend said to her when he first saw her, after this:

"Do you feel willing now, my dear, to die?"

"Yes," she said feebly, and added that she thought God had forgiven her sins. She had prayed for a new heart, and she hoped that God had given her one, for she loved him now, and wanted to be with him.

All her conversation, from this time, was very precious to her friends, as it showed that she had no expectation of getting well, but she was peaceful and happy, in the thought of going to heaven, to be for ever with the good in the presence of her Saviour.

Some one of her country relatives not knowing how feeble she was, and thinking that she would perhaps be well enough to go out again, sent her a present of a new dress. Catharine looked at it with a feeling of pleasure, at being thus remembered by those who were absent, and merely said, as she looked at it, "*It is very pretty, but I shall never wear it.*" We trust that she was soon clothed in white raiment, and admitted to the company of the redeemed.

This little incident, though very trifling in itself, is a delightful evidence of the state of her mind. She could enjoy the world and the things that were in it; her friends and the spirits of her young companions; she could look out of the window, and smile as she admired the beauty of what her eyes beheld, but she felt that she should never be permitted to have them as her own. She had bidden them all farewell, and was now looking for a better country, even an heavenly.

Day after day her frail form was wasting away with the slow progress of disease. A cough set in, and the signs of consumption were appearing. But there was no need of a new disease to hasten her to the tomb. Death had marked her for his own, and who could stay his hand?

On the seventh of January, 1845, she complained of her throat, that it was greatly stopped up, so that she found it very difficult to breathe. She asked for a drink, and her father hastened to bring it to her, saying, however, that he was afraid she could not swallow. The child made an attempt to do so, fell back on her pillow, and was dead!

It wanted but a few days of being two full years from the time she was burned, to the day of her death. During a great part of these two years she suffered extreme pain, and she never enjoyed health for a single moment in all that time. And what a great part of her life was thus spent in pain! How few of those who read these pages ever passed a week in such distress as this child endured

almost without ceasing, for many months!

During much of this time her bodily anguish was so great that she was unable to fix her mind upon any religious subject, however earnestly they might be urged upon her attention; but the progress which she made in the knowledge of divine things was certainly extraordinary, when we remember the discouragements and trials which she endured. Her views of sin, the way to find pardon, and her need of the Saviour, were very clear for one of her age.

And it is another proof that parents do not generally bear in mind how very early their children may be taught by the Holy Spirit, and led to understand all the truths essential to the salvation of their precious souls

How early, we will not undertake to say. But there are many examples of *very* early piety, and every year we meet with new instances of evident conversion in the morning of life. These delightful facts should encourage us to sow the seed "in the morning" and to watch with *faith* to see it springing up to bear early fruit.

Now I trust that those who have read this story of a child of sorrow, will not break off here, though the story is ended, and the remainder is to be taken up with some thoughts which I hope will be useful to my young readers.

You see the great value of the Sabbath-school. It was there that Catharine learned those truths which we hope were the means of saving

her soul. But it was the same instruction which you have received and are now receiving from Sabbath to Sabbath, and which is so common and so often enjoyed, that you, perhaps, set little or no value upon it. You take your seat in the school and hear the word of God, and listen to the invitations of the Saviour, but you do not feel that the salvation of your soul is connected with the instruction you are receiving. There Catharine was taught her sinfulness, though she was always a better girl than most of those are who will read this story. There she was taught, and there you are taught, that unless you forsake your sins and obtain forgiveness for the sake of Jesus Christ you cannot be saved. There you learn that the way to heaven is

by the cross of Christ, and if children feel sorry for their sins and pray to God to pardon them, the Saviour loves to hear their prayers, and will have mercy upon them, and adopt them into his own family, call them his own children, and prepare them to come, when they die, to the mansions he has made ready for them in heaven. Many, very many children have, like Catharine, been thus taught of God, and some of them have gone to glory, and others are now devoted Christians, teaching others still to follow in their steps, and trying to win them to the Saviour they love. We may indulge the hope that Catharine Howell was, by the power of the truths she learned in the Sabbath-school, led to the Saviour, and that she is now in heaven,

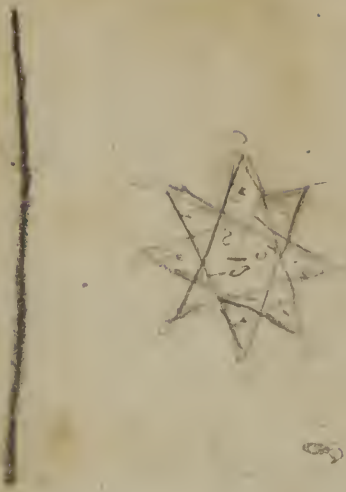
in the arms of Him whom she loved. Her voice will no more mingle with the living voices of the Sabbath-school children, but we hope it is making sweeter music in the songs of the redeemed. Out of the mouth of such babes is the praise of the Saviour made perfect.

In the example of Catharine Howell, you may learn the duty of patience under suffering. Fretfulness never makes pain easier, and often increases it. And when you are fretful and peevish, you are very disagreeable to those who have to take care of you. It is always painful enough for parents to nurse their children when sick, even if they are ever so good; and it is ungrateful and cruel in children to make their parents' labours more distressing by

constantly complaining. And yet it is a fact that they do often fret and find fault, when those who love them are trying to do all in their power to relieve their pain and make them happy.

I wish my young friends could have seen Catharine Howell when she was lying on her little cot, with the frame-work over her to hold up the covering, so that its weight should not press on her dreadful burns! There was an example of patience. And if you could have seen her in the midst of her distress, you would think it a very small matter to bear the pains that now and then you have to endure. And I have no doubt there are many children who fret more under a sore finger, than this dear child did when she was almost burnt up alive.

Learn to be thankful to God that he preserves you from such a dreadful calamity as came upon Catharine. You ought to be very careful, especially in the winter when you have fires in the house, never to go too near them. At school or at home, whether the teacher or your parents are with you or not, never, on any account, *play with fire.* Children are very fond of this amusement, but they often set the house or their clothes on fire, and thus bring great distress on themselves and others. But if you have been kept from such trials as Catharine's, and your life and health are spared, that you may go to church and the Sunday-school, you should be thankful to God for his goodness, and give your hearts to him without delay.

We see in this sad tale of suffering, how God can cause afflictions to prove rich blessings to those who bear them. It was on this bed of wretchedness that the Saviour blessed Catharine's soul with his grace. She had been thoughtful before, but when she was brought low with severe suffering, she saw herself as she had never seen herself before—a sinner before God; and when this discovery was made she was anxious to be holy, and to be prepared for heaven. Even aged Christians often speak of *afflictions* as the means of purifying them and fitting them for the presence and enjoyment of God. This dear girl was early called to pass through tribulation, and it is a source of great consolation to her friends that she was so blessed of

God in the depths of her distress Perhaps God may see fit to lay upon you his afflicting hand. If he thinks it for your good, he will. Perhaps he will take away some of your comforts—he may send sickness upon you, or remove your friends. Your parents may die, or you may be reduced to extreme poverty, so that you will have many days of sorrow and distress, but you should bear in mind that all these things may be the *good gifts of God*, designed for your benefit, and if they are improved as they ought to be, they may be the means of saving your soul. If, in the morning of your days, you should give your heart to the Saviour, and thus grow up for his service, it will be well with you, whatever may be your lot in life.